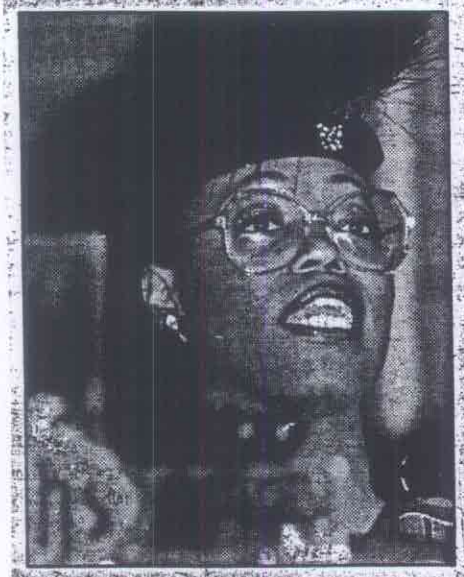
'He's So Much Alive'



Newsday / Bill Davis

Sharon Davis of NAACP

Bells tolled and taps were played at a Copiague church last evening in memory of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

"I hope I played well to honor his legacy," said Marcus Lightbourne, 13, a student at Copiague Junior High School, who played the mournful call on a trumpet at the Bethel AME church. "I was very influenced by that, and how African-Americans are trying to gain equality in America."

About 130 people attended the service, including Norman Mayo, 67, of North Babylon. "He's not really dead," Mayo said of King. "He's so much alive. I have always walked in his footsteps and I see his dream so much alive. We love him and we continue to follow him."

The church's pastor, the Rev. Floyd N. Black, led the service, which was opened with a hymn.

Among the speakers was Sharon Davis, president of the Central Long Island branch of the NAACP, who said, "The destiny of King's dream is not forgotten . . ."

She noted that the Rodney King affair in Los Angeles has been a distortion of King's dream. "Now we are waiting with baited breath for the outcome of the federal case," she said.

Davis said that with the revival of interest in Black Muslim leader Malcolm X, whose philosophy is often considered diametrically opposed to King's, people are beginning "to go back to basics, go back to King's dream of justice and equality."

She added, "For a time there we had gotten away from family values, the concept of the extended family and the dignity of a job whether it's at the top or bottom of the corporate ladder."

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